

2
Top Secret

HAITI:

Extremists Threaten Election Momentum

Despite a promising start and new foreign support, Haiti's election remains hostage to the threat of violence from extremist former Duvalierists.

The UN General Assembly on Wednesday authorized sending as many as 420 observers and security advisers to monitor the election, set for 16 December, and France approved a \$2 million package of election-related aid. voter registration, which ends on 26 October, is off to a good start, particularly in the cities. Almost 10 percent of Haiti's 3 million eligible voters registered last weekend.

Election security will depend heavily on the Haitian Army, which is badly equipped, undisciplined, ill housed, and poorly fed.

The presence of international observers will help build popular support for the election, but those unarmed teams are unlikely to greatly deter the extremists. The government probably still needs an additional \$3-4 million to finance the election, but foreign donors will be reluctant until they gauge the success of the registration process and the threat posed by extremists.

Hopes for a successful election rest on whether the Army contains violence; failure by the Army would quickly dampen foreign and domestic commitment to the election.

Approved for Release

Top Secret

15 October 1990